



Children's Healthy Learning Environments in Low-Income and/or Minority Communities Request for Applications

U.S. Environmental Protection Agency
Office of Children's Health Protection (OCHP)

Webinar for Potential Applicants and Interested
Stakeholders

August 12, 2021

Webinar Logistics

- **Technical Difficulties:** If you are having technical difficulties, please submit a question through the Q&A box in the bottom of your screen to seek help.
- **To Ask a Question:** Type your question in the Q&A box and click “Submit.” We will take questions at designated moments during the webinar.
- **Slides:** The slides are available under “Chat.”

Goals of the Webinar

- Provide an overview of the Children's Healthy Learning Environments in Low-Income and/or Minority Communities Grant Request for Applications (RFA).
- Provide information and answer questions about the application and review process.

Agenda

- **Describe Children's Healthy Learning Environments in Low-Income and/or Minority Communities Grant**
 - Healthy Learning Environments
 - School Communities
 - Low-Income and/or Minority Communities
 - Desired Work
 - American Rescue Plan (ARP)
 - Examples of Activities
 - Eligibility
 - Funding
- **Performance Measures and Reporting**
- **Break for Questions**
- **Application Submission and Evaluation**
 - Critical Elements of RFA
 - Threshold Eligibility Criteria
 - Evaluation Criteria
 - Grant Application Evaluation
- **Tips & Resources**
- **Break for Questions**

Healthy Learning Environments

- Capacity-building projects in schools and/or childcare centers
 - Help school communities understand and address local environmental and public health issues that affect children
- Children's physical environments play a critical role in their health, development and safety
- Unique exposures in school and childcare-based settings

School Communities

- For the purposes of this solicitation:
 - *Schools* include public, private, charter, parochial and K-12 schools
 - *Childcare settings* include early care and education, such as nurseries, preschools, pre-kindergartens, centers, child development programs, Head Start, Early Head Start and in-home childcare facilities
- Projects can address schools AND/OR childcare settings
- Projects must take place in schools and/or childcare centers that are located in minority and/or low-income communities and/or primarily serve student populations that are minority and/or low-income

Low-Income and/or Minority Communities

- Applications will be evaluated on the ability to clearly describe disproportionate children's health harms and risks in low-income and/or minority communities
- Example data to include:
 - Demographics and/or socioeconomic status of the community and schools and/or childcare centers impacted (e.g., number of children eligible for free and reduced price lunches; in families receiving assistance under TANF; eligible under Medicaid)
 - Indicators of children's environmental health (e.g., rate of children's asthma, lead poisoning incidence)

Desired Work

- EPA is interested in receiving applications that:
 - Demonstrate, implement or expand innovative methods and approaches to prevent and reduce exposures in schools and childcare settings.
 - Emphasize a “learning” concept – transfer of information, advancing awareness and demonstrating changes in attitudes and behaviors of those participating
- Projects should be:
 - Multi-media – involving multiple environmental health hazards air pollution and/or unsafe drinking water
 - Holistic – involving multiple stakeholders and built on strong partnerships
- Projects should build upon existing work rather than replicating current efforts.

American Rescue Plan (ARP)

- ARP funding was made available to address health outcome disparities from pollution and/or the COVID-19 pandemic
- Clean Air Act, Section 103(b)(3): conduct research, investigations, experiments, demonstration projects, surveys, and studies **related to the causes, effects (including health and welfare effects), extent, prevention, and control of air pollution.**
- Safe Drinking Water Act, Section 1442(c)(3): develop and expand the capability to carry out a program (that may combine training, education, and employment) for occupations **relating to the public health aspects of providing safe drinking water.**

Examples of Eligible Activities

- Develop and deliver guidance, technical assistance, training, or other support to school districts to assist them in implementing school environmental health programs, including prevention/assessment of air and/or drinking water hazards
- Develop and implement outreach and training activities to promote the adoption of a comprehensive program to improve indoor air quality
- Launch an existing healthy schools or healthy childcare program to address multiple environmental and safety hazards, including air and/or drinking water quality

Examples of Ineligible Activities

- “Fixing” a school building or environmental issue: e.g., completing a school chemical cleanout, installing air conditioning filters, routine recycling services
- Advocacy promoting a particular point of view or course of action
- Childcare center and/or school rent or payroll
- If any of these activities represent more than a small or ancillary part of your project work, EPA will not consider the application for an award.

Eligible Entities

- States or state agencies, territories, city or township governments, federally recognized Tribes
- Public and private universities and colleges, hospitals, laboratories
- Other public or private nonprofit institutions and 501(c)(3) organizations
- Not eligible: 501(c)(4) organizations that engage in lobbying; for-profit organizations

Grant Funding

- EPA expects to award a total of \$2 million, evenly split between 10 organizations (1 per EPA region).
- Project periods can be up to 2 years.
 - The estimated project period will be March 1, 2022 – February 28, 2024.
- Funding will be awarded as a cooperative agreement.
 - Involve substantial involvement between the EPA and the selected applicant in performance of supported work. EPA will negotiate precise terms and conditions relating to substantial involvement as part of the award process.
- There is no match or cost-sharing requirement.
- EPA reserves the right to reject all applications and make no awards or fewer awards than anticipated, under this announcement.
- EPA reserves the right to partially fund applications by funding discrete portions or phases of proposed projects.

Performance Measures

- Example outputs
 - Educational, training, or outreach materials developed
 - Measures to assess progress established
 - Partnerships/collaborations established
- Example outcomes
 - Reduced environmental health or safety risks affecting children
 - Reduced children's exposure to environmental contaminants
 - Increased awareness among students and staff about the school environment

Grant Reporting

- Periodic formal progress reports
 - Status of all objectives and activities outlined in the project, statement of impacts, incurred project expenses
- Final Technical Report
 - Summary of the project, advances achieved, costs, problems, successes, and lessons learned from the project
- A schedule for reporting will be established by EPA after award.

Questions?



Critical Elements of RFA

- DEADLINE: APPLICATIONS ARE DUE FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 10, 2021 by 11:59pm EDT
- THRESHOLD ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA
- EVALUATION CRITERIA
- SUBMISSION PROCESS

Threshold Eligibility Criteria

- Applications must meet the Threshold Eligibility Criteria in order to be considered for funding.
- Only applications that meet all Threshold Eligibility Criteria will be evaluated and ranked against the Evaluation Criteria described in Section V of the RFA.

Threshold Eligibility Criteria (contd.)

1. Projects must address health outcome disparities from pollution and/or the COVID-19 pandemic and identify and address disproportionate environmental health harms and risks in minority populations and/or low-income populations.
2. Applicants must propose activities eligible for funding under CAA Section 103 and/or SDWA Section 1442.
3. Applications comply with submission instructions, including page limits where noted.
4. Applications must be submitted through Grants.gov or an accepted alternative method.
5. Applications must be submitted on time. Late submittals will not be considered.

Threshold Eligibility Criteria (contd.)

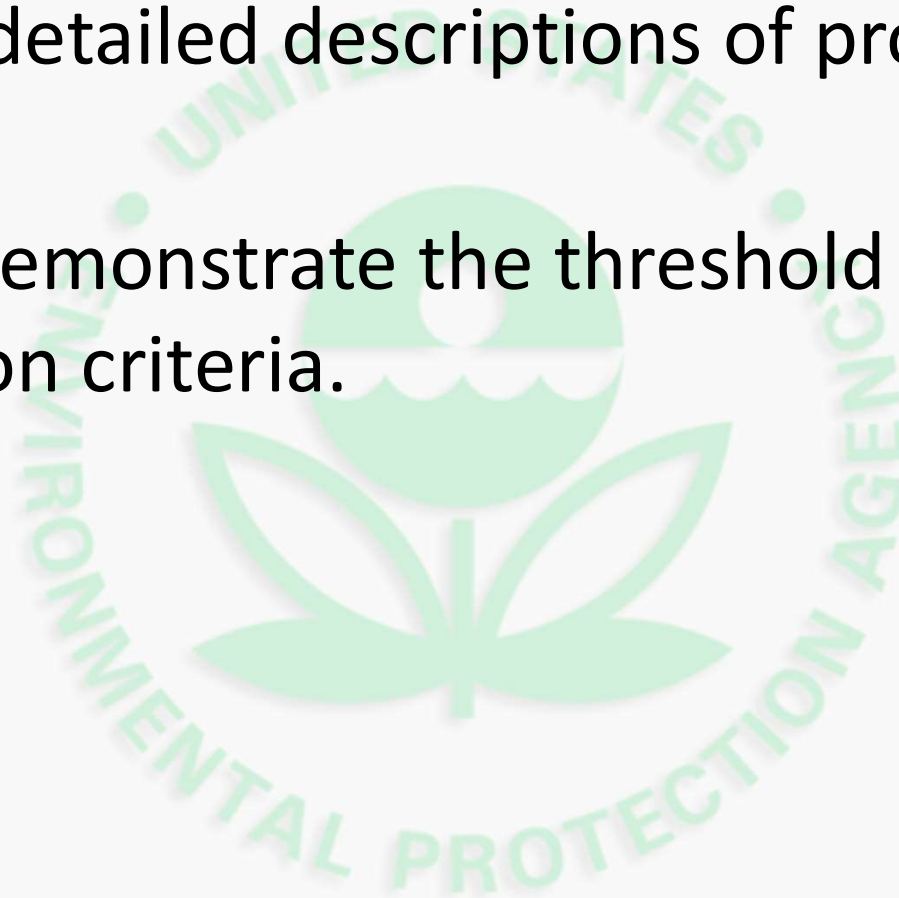
6. Applications must be from an eligible organization.
7. Applicants may only submit 1 proposal under this solicitation.
8. Applications must describe how work aligns with EPA's Strategic Goal 1: A Cleaner Healthier Environment, Objective 1.1: to improve air quality and/or Objective 1.2: provide for clean and safe water.
9. Projects must not be routine program implementation or environmental protection, meet any legal mandate, purchase of land or vehicles, or completion of work under a prior grant.

Grant Evaluation

- What will reviewers be looking for in the proposal narrative?
 - Compliance with Threshold Eligibility Criteria and submission requirements.
 - Scope of Work – focus on capacity building and “learning” concepts.
 - Clear responsiveness to Evaluation Criteria.

Tips for Preparing Applications

- Provide detailed descriptions of proposed work.
- Clearly demonstrate the threshold and evaluation criteria.



Resources

- Agency Contact – Section VII of RFA
 - EPACChildren@epa.gov
- Refer to EPA's [Children's Healthy Learning Environments in Low-Income and/or Minority Communities Grant page](#)
 - FAQs will be posted here after the webinar
- EPA Grants Overview for Applicants and Recipients page:
<https://www.epa.gov/grants/epa-grants-overview-applicants-and-recipients>
 - Training, forms, key resources

Questions?

